Hartstongue. Hartstongue. Master

A SERMON PREACHED AT St. Mary Le Bow,

Novemb. 27. 1682.

Being the Day of the

Wiltshire-Feast.

By *EDWARD PELLING*, Rector of St. *Martins Ludgate*, and Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of *Somerset*.

We have no King, because we feared not the Lord, Hos. 10. 3.

For the Transgression of a Land, many are the Princes thereof, Prov. 28. 2.

Συνωμοσίαι καὶ συστάσεις ἑταιρεῖαί τε ἥκιστα μοναρχίᾳ συμφέρει.

Conspiracies, Combinations, and Associations, do not at all consist with Monarchy. Dio. *Cited by Bishop* Usher, Of the Power of the Prince, *pag.* 67.

LONDON:

Printed for *John Crump*; at the *Three Bibles* in St. *Paul's Church-yard*; And *William Abington*, at the *Three Silk-worms* in *Ludgate-street*. 1683.

Hartstongue. Hartstongue. From Master

To my Worthy

FRIENDS and COUNTRYMEN,

Mr. *John Davies*,
Mr. *Cornelius Dyer*,
Mr. *William Cleeve*,
Mr. *John Hunt*,
Mr. *William Davies*,
Mr. *Edward Odell*,
Mr. *Thomas Jones*,
Mr. *Stephen Palmer*,
Mr. *Anthony White*,
Mr. *Tho. Fitz-Rudell.*

Stewards of the late *Wiltſhire*-Feaſt.

Gentlemen,

WHEN you Requeſted of me to Preach before you at your Solemn Meeting, I thought my ſelf Obliged to Anſwer your deſires, by that Natural Affection I bear to my Native Countrey, and by thoſe Reſpects I owe to all my Countrey men, and particularly to your ſelves.

And having received Payment of that Debt which was due on my part, you will acknowledge, I preſume, that you have contracted a Debt to me, by prevailing with me to Expoſe the Sermon to the view of a Cenſorious World; for a ſtrong

Obligation lyeth upon you to Defend that, which now you have made your Own.

The Deſign and Scope of this following Diſcourſe is, to encourage Men to be Heartily and Firmly Loyal: A Leſſon, which though ſome are pleaſed to Deſpiſe, others to be Incenſed at, and many now a days care not to hear of, yet is ſo abſolutely Neceſſary to be taught, that the Kingdom cannot proſper, nor the Government ſtand, nor Chriſtianity it ſelf be duly practis'd without it.

If this Diſcourſe ſerveth to Contribute any thing hereunto, I have obtained my Ends, and am only to deſire your kind Acceptance thereof from

Your Faithful Friend and Servant,
in Chriſt Jeſus,
Edw. Pelling.

Decemb. 2d. 1682.

PROV. 24. 21.

--Meddle not with them that are given to Change.

M*Aximus Tyrius* the Platoniſt ſpeaking of Three Sorts of Government, *Monarchy*, *Ariſtocracy*, and *Democracy*, (the *Laſt* whereof He calls by way of Reproach, Ὀχλοκρατίαν, that is, a Rabble-regiment; the Baſeſt of all others, being both Sordid in its Conſtitution, and the moſt Arbitrary and Tyrannical in its Adminiſtration : This Philoſopher, I ſay,) though he was ſo Wiſe as to prefer an Ariſtocratical before a Popular Government; yet he was ſo Juſt too, as to prefer Regal Government before Both : Happy is that City, ſaith he, which hath a King for its Governour.

Δσγ. ς.

Ἡ μὲν εὐδαίμων πόλις βασιλεύεται.

But the Beſt Conſtituted form in the World cannot be either Effectual to the Ends of Government, or Happy in the Management thereof, unleſs there be ſuch a good poſture of affairs, that as the Supreme Authority is Seated in the Head of the Kingdom, ſo due and regular Obedience be paid by the Inferior Members. 'Tis Harmony (as the Philoſopher ſaith) and Order that preſerveth Societies, when all men that are in a Subordinate State, do readily yield to Him who is the Supreme according to God's Law. This was the Wiſdom even of a Pagan.

Τὸ δὲ σῶζον τὰς πόλεις, ἡ ἁρμονία καὶ ὁ τῆς πολιτείας κόσμος. *Max. Tyr. ibid.* Τῶν ἄλλων μερῶν εἰκόντων κατὰ τὸν θεοῦ νόμον. *Id. ibid.*

And agreeable hereunto is the Tenor of that Wiſdom which is Revealed from Heaven. For one end of Religion is to be Serviceable even to the Political and Civil intereſts of Mankind; and becauſe there can be no Temporal Felicity without Peace, nor Peace without Loyal and Dutiful Subjection; and becauſe the Contempt of Majeſty is the Mother of Diſobedience, and Diſobedience is productive of Confuſion, and where Confuſion is *there is every evil Work*; therefore that *Wiſdom which is from above*

above, and which is *Pure and Peaceable*, doth here in my Text call upon all ſuch as would be truly Happy, in the firſt place to Fear God, the great Sovereign of the whole World; and in ſubordination to Him, to pay that Filial Reverence and Subjection unto the King, which is his Right and Due, as he is the immediate Deputy, Vicegerent, and Commiſſioner of God himſelf. For if men would be once perſwaded to this, every thing then would be in its proper Chanel, Peace would flouriſh upon Earth, and God would Bleſs us; thoſe Calamities would be removed which are the Natural conſequences of wicked Aſſociations and Conſpiracies, the Malice of Devils would be Edgleſs, the Deſigns of Evil Men would be Baffled, Quietneſs would be our Portion, the Kingdom would Proſper, and we *ſhould* be where we *would* be, in as Happy a condition as we *can* be in this World. 'Tis for theſe great Purpoſes, that the Spirit of God gives us this Excellent advice, *That we fear the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to Change.*

That I may enter Fairly, and proceed Methodically upon the conſideration of this place of Scripture, there is a Twofold Precept to be obſerved in the whole compaſs of it.

1. An *Affirmative* Command, in the former part of the Verſe, that we expreſs that Humble and Univerſal Fear which is due to *God*'s Majeſty, and that becoming Reverence which is due to the *King*'s Majeſty for God's ſake; *My Son, fear thou the Lord and the King.* Now as touching this matter, as I ſhall not wave it altogether, ſo neither ſhall I employ my Meditations upon it at Large; not that I think it either unbecoming my *Place*, or unſuitable to this *Solemnity*, or unſeaſonable for the *Times;* or a Subject that is in any wiſe *Improper* or *Unneceſſary*, eſpecially ſince True Loyalty has been ſo lately reproached for a *Crime*, and eſteemed a kind of *Treaſon* againſt the *People* to be Dutiful to the *King*; and to Diſhonour the *Prince* has been thought a branch of that *Liberty*, *Right* and *Privilege* which belongeth unto the *Subject*; and all this by ſome who have

have *profeſt* themſelves *moſt Loyal* and *moſt Dutiful*; like ſome of old, who threw *Stones* at their God *Hermes* when they pretended to *Worſhip* him. Upon Theſe accounts indeed it might not be amiſs for me to ſhew you, what the Laws of God require in this caſe, and how Religion and Allegiance, the Fear of the Lord and of the King, go hand in hand. But becauſe this would take up all the time I have to ſpare, and a great deal *more*, for that Reaſon (and for that Reaſon *only*) I ſhall *Poſtpone* this conſideration, and take notice of it towards the *Cloſe* of this Diſcourſe, and proceed to treat *immediately* and *chiefly* of.

2. The other part of the Text, the *Negative* Precept, in the Latter words; that we have nothing to do with Them, who when things are well, under pretence of *Mending* would fain *Marr* all, and alter every thing, whether it be Religion, or Laws, or Government, or whatſoever lyeth in their way, as an Hinderance to their baſe *Deſigns*; *Meddle not with them that are given to Change.*

About

About the genuine Meaning of *Solomon* in this place, there is ſome difference between Expoſitors, though moſt of them do render it much according as 'tis rendred in our Tranſlation. And I humbly conceive, that the beſt way of finding out the Full meaning of that Wiſe King in this place is, to obſerve well the *ſtate* of thoſe times wherein *David* and *He* ſucceſſively reigned over *Iſrael*. And if we carry our Eye upon ſome Occurrences in thoſe times, upon which King *Solomon* in all likelihood doth Reflect here, it will appear, that though One Interpretation may be *Preferable* to another, yet All Interpretations may be ſo Conſiſtent, as to deſerve a *ſhare* in our Meditations.

1. Firſt then, ſome Learned Criticks render it Thus, *Ne commiſcearis cum Iterantibus iniquitates ſuas*; Meddle not with them that act their Iniquities over *again*, them that are Diſobedient and Diſloyal *afreſh*; them that *Repeat* their *Old* Sins againſt the King and his Regalities; them that are for a *Change*, but not of their own *Principles* and *Courſes*; them that would

See the Large Criticks.

would fain change the *ſtate* of *Affairs*, but will no more change their own *Minds*, than *the Leopard changeth his Spots, or the Ethiopian his Skin*, as the expreſſion is, *Jer.* 13. 23.

Now if *This* Interpretation carries it, we may conceive ſome *Intimation* to be given us here, that there was a ſort of evil men in *Solomon's* days, who had born his good Father and Him an inveterate Grudge, which for fear of the *Sword* in the King's hand, they *Smothered* and kept *Secret* for a *while*; but when opportunity began to *Smile*, and the Waters were like to be *Troubled*, and the Peace of the Kingdom was in ſome Danger, then they ſhewed the World, that the King's *Kindneſs* and *Mercy* had not Reclaimed nor wrought any *Repentance* in them, but they were the very *Same* men ſtill, and as ready as ever to ſtrike at the Government, and were only *Emboldned* by *Indulgence*, and acted ſo, as if Clemency, which is reputed a *Vertue* in every Prince, had been a kind of Hurtful *Vice* in the King of *Iſrael*.

I cannot be Poſitive, that this was the

Direct

Direct meaning of *Solomon* in my Text; and yet out of reſpect to the Judgment of thoſe who have given us their Senſe to this purpoſe, I am loth to *Loſe* this Interpretation, or *ſlightly* to paſs it by. For if we go back as far as the days of *Solomon*, we may ſee that by what he had found by his own woful *Experience*, He had great Reaſon to Caution all the World for the future, to have nothing to do with thoſe *Intractable* and *Ungrateful men*, who *Repent* not of their Diſloyalty to God and the King, but *perſiſt* and *go on* in their Wickedneſs, fond of the *Same Principles*, Longing for the *Same* Opportunities, Hankering after the *Same* Succeſſes, and treading in the *Same* Steps, which they trod in *Before*.

If we look into the Second Book of *Samuel*, and the Firſt Book of the *Kings*, wherein the End of *David*'s Reign and All *Solomon*'s is contained, we ſhall find, that the whole Houſe of *Saul* (a very few excepted) did bear an Inveterate Hatred againſt the Houſe of *David* for the ſake of the Crown. For *Saul* had been a *Protector* of

of *Iſrael*, but a very Wicked one; and his Family and Friends were deeply galled at the Heart, when they conſidered how the Scepter was departed out of their hands, and they were Caſhier'd the Court, and had no ſhare in the Government. This was ſuch a Trouble and Vexation to *Saul*'s *Adherents*, that though *David* had ſpared their Lives, and given them the quiet Poſſeſſion of their Lands, and by many Acts of Grace had endeavoured to make Himſelf and his Government *Eaſie* to them all; yet the moſt Princely favours could not Oblige nor Cure them of their Venom; but when *Abſalom*'s Diſturbance hapned, they diſcovered the Old Sore that had been Wrankling ſo long, and Laboured to be Reveng'd for the loſs of the Throne, and to Recover it if it were poſſible. What was that act of *Shimei*'s but an Expreſſion of the moſt incurable Malice? in 2 *Sam.* 16. For when the King was now flying out of the Land, and was in his greateſt Diſtreſs, to add Affliction to Miſery, *Shimei Curſed him, and caſt Stones at him, as a Bloudy man*, as an Arbitrary, Tyrannical and Cruel Prince. And do but ob-

ſerve the after-carriage of this Wretch; upon the King's *Reſtauration* he throws himſelf at the King's feet, and obtains his Pardon, 2 *Sam.* 19. And who would not have thought that *Shimei* was a Convert? But yet, when *Solomon* was ſetled in the Throne, this ſame *Shimei* makes *light* of the King's Commands; and as he *Hated* the Father, ſo he *Diſobeyed* the Son, inſomuch that the King found there was no way left him but to put him to death, 1 *Kin.* 2. This was one of thoſe Many (whom I cannot ſtay to inſtance in) that did. *Iterare iniquitates ſuas*--like *Ungrateful* perſons act over their Wickedneſs *again*, and ſhewed the King what he was to look for at their hands, when Strength and Opportunity ſhould ſuit to their Minds, and favour their Intentions.

Obſerve, I pray, that I give you only an *Hiſtorical* Account of things out of the Scriptures; it being my buſineſs to ſhew what *Reaſon* ſome Expoſitors have to underſtand my Text of Such, as in ſpight of all Clemency and Favour are ever and anon expreſſing *Freſh* acts of Diſloyalty, and betray the Dear Love they have of their *Old* Sins:

Sins: And withall, that You may ſee that if *Solomon* did *not* mean Such here in my Text, yet he had *Reaſon* enough to mean them, and to give Warning, as to all *Wiſe Kings* to *Beware* of Such, ſo to all good *People* and Sons of *Wiſdom* to beware of *Medling* with Such, as will not be held *Sure* by any the *Strongeſt* cords of *Love*, nor prevailed with by any the *Greateſt* acts of *Kindneſs*, to change the baſe Temper and Diſpoſition of their Hearts (though That be the thing which needeth the greateſt Change of all) but are ſo perfectly ſet upon Undutifulneſs and Diſloyalty to the Crown, that though they *Diſſemble* their Purpoſes for a Time, yet when a fairer Opportunity ſhall offer it ſelf, will *Iterare iniquitates ſuas*--- Sin over Former Sins, and do as Before, violate Promiſes, break Oaths, revile Dignities, pull at the Eſtabliſht Government, and change Loyalty for Faction, a good Conſcience for Filthy Lucre, Order for Confuſion, and an Happy Peace for Uncertainties, and for Iſſues which they themſelves cannot Foreſee, nor are able to tell what times of Confuſion will bring forth: *My Son, fear thou the Lord and the*

King, and take an eſpecial care that thou meddle not with Such.

2. But then, Secondly, other Expoſitors do not *Reſtrain* the ſenſe of the Text ſo, as to underſtand it *only* of *This* ſort of men whoſe *Old* Scores are ſtill upon the File, but interpret it in General and Indifferently of All that are given to Change, though ſome of them for a conſiderable time may have kept *touch* with the Government. Meddle not, *cum mutantibus*, with them that Change their good Principles. *Cum diverſum à præceptis Dei & Regis facientibus*, with them that act otherwiſe than God's and the King's Commands do require. *Cum aliter agentibus*, with them that *Warp* from their Obedience, and take a *different* courſe from what they did, when the fear of God, or of the King, or of Both, kept them in Order. *Cum variis*, with them that are Unſteddy and Inconſiſtent with themſelves, that obſerve the Pulſe of the *Times*, that ſhift and move according as the *Weather* ſhifts its point, like *things* that turn with the Wind. *Cum declinantibus & deficientibus*, with them that *Start aſide* out of the Right

Right path, that *Shrink* from their Duty, that ſhake off the Yoke of due Subjection, that make a Party to Trouble *Iſrael*, that Raiſe or Encourage Diſturbances, and make a Defection from their Lawful King or his Government. Thus ſeveral Divines have taken ſeveral ways of expreſſing their thoughts upon this place of *Solomon*, but the Senſe of them all is in a manner to the ſame effect, *viz.* that men ſhould be Quiet and Dutiful, and Contented with their Lot when things are well and in their right Chanel, and not abet the practices of thoſe who cannot be eaſie till the Mire be ſtirred, and the Wheel be turned upſide down.

To ſtop the mouth of *Malice*, I hope you note ſtill, that I am endeavouring only to find out King *Solomon's meaning*; and *that* being cleared, it may not be amiſs for us to enquire a little into thoſe *Reaſons* which *Solomon* grounded this his Excellent Advice upon.

Now every man that hath Eyes may ſee, that the Changes here ſpoken of are always attended with a Retinue of the moſt Miſchievous *Concomitants* and *Effects*, as War, Bloudſhed, Confuſion, Rapine, the Subver-

ſion

ſion of Laws, the Ruin of Families, the Deſtruction of the whole Kingdom, and with ſuch an Army of intolerable Miſeries, that perhaps a Fickle people can hardly groan under any Plague that is Greater and Heavier to them than their *own* Deſires, or be Curſed with a greater Curſe than their own *Option.*

And when all is done, a well-ſetled Nation never maketh an Exchange but for the *Worſe*; like Weak people that are Cullied into a Willingneſs to change their *Old* and *Try'd* Friends, for others whom they get nothing by but *this*, that they Learn at length by their own Coſtly Experience to Repent of a *Fooliſh* and *Unfortunate* bargain.

But beſides the conſideration of theſe Evils which are the *Effects* of Innovation, King *Solomon*, 'tis likely, did now bethink himſelf of thoſe *Cauſes* which he found have given birth to an Innovating Humour in *His* time; and ſo from his own Obſervations he might charge us to be very careful how we Truſt, or *Meddle with thoſe that are given to Change.*

'Tis Rare that any Change of Governors or Government is attempted, but under ſome

ſome cleanly *Diſguiſe*, and popular *Pretenſe*, or other. When Monarchy was deſtroyed by the *Greeks* and *Romans*, the Peoples *Liberties* was the *Pretenſe*. And when the ſame thing was acted here among *Us*, *Liberty* and *Property*, and *Religion* too was the *Cloak*: And indeed as Change of Government was never yet introduced in *Any* Nation, but ſome Specious *Artifice* was a *Preface* to the *Introduction*. Popular States have been erected by the Popular Tricks of men, who have in all Ages *Abuſed* the Undiſcerning and Unthinking Vulgar, and have employed the Weakneſs, Paſſions, and Hands of the Populace as Inſtruments to Concur with the Pretenſions of the *Ringleaders*, who had nothing all the time, but Love of Empire, or ſome ſuch Wickedneſs at the bottom. *There is no new thing under the Sun*, ſaith *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 1.9. For even *This* was an *Old* Artifice in the days of his Father, as any man may ſee, that will but conſider the Hiſtory of thoſe Times: And thus it was,

Three very conſiderable Diſturbances there were which afforded Trouble unto King *David*, and which were like to have cauſed

caused great Alterations in the Kingdom. The First was raised by *Absalom*, 2 *Sam.* 15. The Second by *Sheba*, 2 *Sam.* 20. And the Third (which hapned in *David*'s Old Age) was begun by *another* graceless Son of His, *Adonijah* by Name, 1 *Kings* 1. Now, whatever these men Pretended as a Cloak for their Rebellion, it was nothing but an Evil Design that was *under* the Mantle; and the Reasons on which they acted were Unjustifiable and Base, as well in the *Heads* of the Parties, as in others who were *Complices* in the Association; which Consideration serveth much to clear up the Sense of *Solomon* in my Text, and (by Arguments drawn from the Experience he had of his Father's days) to render this his Advice *Just* and *Rational*, that we *meddle not with them that are given to Change.*

For, First, the Reason of *Absalom*'s Conspiracy was *Ambition.* Indeed *other* Sins were the *Concomitants* of his Treason; as 1. His *Ingratitude* (which is always *one* of the Rebels Sins.) 2. His *Aspersing* of his Father's Government, as if men had not Justice done them; *O that I were made Judg in Israel*, &c. said he, 2 *Sam.* 15.

3. His

3. His *Hipocriſie* For to accompliſh his wicked ends he pretends Religion, and deceives People with an Appearance of ſingular *Sanctity.* When he deſigned to ſet up his Standard and to blow the Trumpet in *Hebron*, he deſired leave to go thither under colour of paying a *Vow*, to make good a Sacred Promiſe, an *Holy Covenant* that he had made unto God. Rebellion was the *Deſign*, and the Free exerciſe of his Religion, a little *Liberty of Conſcience* was the *Mask*; and no ſooner had the King granted his Humble Petition, but an *Inſurrection* was up, and the noiſe of *Trumpets* was in his Ears. Here was a whole *Complication* of divers abominable Crimes; but *Ambition* was the *Mother-ſin* that brought forth the reſt. 'Twas *This* that made him Ungrateful; and his *Defaming* of the Government and ſeeming Zeal were the common Arts which Mutineers and Traitors ordinarily have uſed, only to ſerve the Intereſt of Proud, Factious, and Ungovernable Spirits.

2. And what was it, but the like *Ambitious* Emulation in *Adonijah*, that made *Him* alſo to endeavour a change, the King his Fathe

being yet alive? Dominion and Government was the thing, which he had ſuch a Licoriſh deſire after; and rather than miſs of that he was reſolved to hurle the whole Kingdom into confuſion, and venture Gods everlaſting diſpleaſure.

3. But *Sheba*'s reaſons were of ſomewhat a different Nature, when *he* indeavoured a change and gave that formidable Alarm, *Every man to his Tents, O* Iſrael, 2 *Sam.* 20. upon the Kings *Reſtauration*, the men of *Iſrael* ſaid, we have *Ten* parts in *David*; and becauſe they thought themſelves *ſlighted*, preſently *Sheba* and his Aſſociates *Rebell*, uſing this *upbraiding* language, theſe expreſſions of *Diſcontent*, *We have no part in* David, *neither have we inheritance in the Son of* Jeſſe. Though theſe men had been *unfaithful* to *David*, and had ſet up an *Uſurper* to rule over them, though the men of *Judah* had the greateſt honour and hand in bringing their Baniſh't King home, and the men of *Iſrael* had made his Reſtauration matter of ſome *Debate* (whether it was for fear of *ſmarting* for their Diſloyalty, or that they would *Tye* the King to *Conditions*, or the like;) and though they complyed

plyed upon ſome *Conſtraint*, and upon a kind of *moral neceſſity*: Yet nevertheleſs they expected to *fare well*, by their perfidiouſneſs, and nothing would ſatisfie them unleſs they *Appropriated* the King to *themſelves* and the Kings muſt be their *own* at laſt. And becauſe they could not be the *only* men at Court, to go away with all the *Honours* and *Rewards*, to be at *Davids* Right hand, to *Influence* and *Rule* him at their pleaſure; therefore they are *Malecontents* preſently, and ſtudy to be *Revenged* for their diſappointments, though Thouſands of poor Souls ſuffer in the Quarrel, and though the whole Kingdom be turned into a Field of Blood.

Still I do but do the part of an Hiſtorian, to relate matter of *Fact*, and to ſhew you what thoſe Real (but Baſe) Motives and Inducements were, upon which King *Solomon* remembred that theſe Factious men Acted in the Reign of his Father. They would have thrown every thing off the Hooks, *pretending* this or that to *deceive* the unskilful *Vulgar*, but deſigning only to ſatisfie an *Ambitious* and wicked Appetite, or to be *Even* with the Government for Croſſing their unreaſonable

Humors; ſo that *Solomon* had great Reaſon to warn the World, to miſtruſt ſuch Factious pretenders, and not to meddle with them that are given to change.

Let us now go on a little *further*, from the grand *Conſpirators* to their *Confederates*, ſuch as entred into a *Covenant* and *Aſſociation* with them. And were not the Reaſons upon which *Theſe* acted too, ſuch as *Good* men *ought* not, and Wiſe men *need* not be ſwayed by? Look a little into the Hiſtory of thoſe times again, and you may obſerve that theſe Confederates were notorious, either for a Fooliſh *Credulity*, or for *Guilt* of Conſcience, or for *Love* of Innovation, or for deep *Malice*, or for a ſtrange kind of *Levity* and *Inconſtancy* of mind.

1. Some of them were *Fooliſhly Credulous*. For the Text tells us expreſly, that there went with *Abſalom two hundred men out of* Jeruſalem, *and that they went in their Simplicity, and knew not any thing.* 2. *Sam.* 15. 11. They did not dream or Imagine any other, but that he went to *Hebron* to perform his *Vows* only, and that 'twas nothing but *Religion* and point of *Conſcience* that led him thither, not miſtruſting that his deſigns were ſo Black, as to put him-

himſelf into Arms againſt God's anointed and his own Father. This I ſay was a *Fooliſh* Credulity, becauſe his Popular Carriage and Inſinuations againſt the Government were enough to make diſcerning men very Suſpitious, that he had an Aſpiring and Diſaffected mind; and ſo, that there might be ſome *Further* end of his journey, than what was pretended: Tho we may yield, that the making of Piety a Cloak for wickedneſs was not ſuch a *Common* and *Proſperous* trade in thoſe days, as it hath been in theſe *latter* times, ſince the Art and Trade hath been ſo improved.

2. Now theſe had *Guilt* upon their *Conſciences*, which made them *Pertinacious*. For having been once obnoxious, they thought there was no way to *Retreat*, no Remedy but to venture all their Fortunes in the Cauſe they had undertaken; like ill men, that having once adventur'd to draw the Sword againſt their Lawful Prince, are led on further by the Devil to think it Neceſſary, Firſt to throw the Scabbard *away*, and then (if they can) to embrue the Weapon in their Princes *Blood*.

3. And then, as to the *Generality* of *Abſoloms* Confederates, they were men that Loved

ved and Delighted in Faction, it run as it were in the Blood of the men of *Iſrael*, eſpecially in the Vulgar and baſer ſort, which *commonly* are deſirous to break a State into pieces, not that they can find any conſiderable *fault* in it, but becauſe Plunder and Pillage, and Sequeſtration is ſweet, and (as they think) the moſt *Probable* and *Speedy* courſe to *make*, or to *mend* their Fortunes.

4. But the Reaſon of *Ahitophels* Confederacy was of ſomewhat a *Higher* Nature; for it ſeems to have been perfect *Malice* and ſpight againſt the Kings *Perſon*. For though he had been one of *Davids Counſellors* (and a *Shrewd* man too, eſpecially at *Miſchief*) yet having joyned in the Confederacy, he offered to go himſelf after *David*, deſirous to kill none but *David* (who was the moſt *ſacred* perſon of *all*;) *The people that are with him ſhall Flee, and I will ſmite the King only*, ſaid *Ahitophel*, 2 *Sam.* 17. 2. Nay ſo *maliciouſly* was he bent upon it, that when it was not yielded, that he ſhould go into the *Field* to kill the *King*, he went to his own *Houſe* and hanged himſelf: a ſin which (if I miſtake not) there are but two that we read of in Scripture, who

who were permitted by the Juſt Judgment of God to commit, and they were both of them *Traytors*; this *Ahitophel* that betrayed his *King*, and *Judas* that betray'd the *Son* of *God*.

5. Beſides theſe *already* mentioned, ſome in *Salomons* times were given to change out of a ſtrange kind of *Levity* and *Inconſtancy* of mind, and therefore ſome Expoſitors render the place thus, meddle not, *cum inconſtantibus*, with men that are *Fickle* and *Unſteddy* in their Loyalty. Would we not think it *Strange*, ſhould men who have ſhewed their Fidelity all along; men who have Acted, Fought, Suffer'd, and ventur'd their very *Lives* for the ſake of Majeſty; ſhould ſuch, I ſay, ſtart *aſide*, and ſuffer themſelves to be *wheadled* into Faction at *laſt*? Truly we might wonder at it the *Leſs*, when we conſider that it was the caſe of ſeveral men in the Reign of *David*, and eſpecially *Two* very *Eminent* perſons, *Abiathar* the *Prieſt*, and *Joab* that brave *Commander*; the *Former* had been *Davids* ſecret and ſure Friend, and the *Latter* had not turned after *Abſolom*: Both of them had been Faithful *hitherto*; but when *Adonijah* uſurped

ped the Kingdom, both of them were concerned in *that* Plot the *Prieſt* turned an *Apoſtate*, and the *General* a *Renegado*; upon what Provocations, I do not know, nor can I gather any Reaſon thereof, unleſs it be that I now have mentioned, a ſtrange *Inconſtancy* of Spirit in men, who in *David's* old Age thought it their beſt cunning, to take up the *Perſian* cuſtom, and worſhip the *Riſing* Sun.

By this time I hope you clearly ſee the Senſe of *Salomon*; and what juſt *Grounds* that wiſe Prince had to Caution us not to Meddle with thoſe that are given to change; it being poſſible, that as it was in *His* time, ſo it might be in *after-ages*, and evil men might be troubleſome to Government, pretending, perhaps, fairly to cheat the Populace, when in truth 'tis either *Ambition* that is at the bottom of their actions, or *Diſcontent*, or a ſenſe of *Guilt*, or *Malice*, or an unaccountable kind of *Fickleneſs*, or ſuch other provocations, which render themſelves *Criminal*, and the Concurrence of their Complices, *Raſh* and *Unadviſed*.

If it be expected now, that by way of Application I ſhould reflect upon ſome in *theſe* times, who are preſumed to be much of the Temper and Spirit of thoſe in *Solomons* days, truly I ſhall not anſwer any ſuch expectations: it is beſides my purpoſe, therefore I ſhall ſo far obſerve my Text my ſelf, as not to meddle with ſuch Men, no not in *this* Senſe.

My buſineſs is, Beloved, to Miniſter ſome hints unto you, that in this giddy and ſtaggering Age you may not be *abuſed* and *impoſed* on; but may learn to diſtinguiſh between the *Saint* that pretends *Religion*, and the *Incendiary* that aims at *Government*, and would fain turn the State of things with the Heels *uppermoſt*, and bring us to that which the old *Romans* obſerved in the Feaſts of *Saturn*, when the *Maſter* waited at Table on the *Servant*. *Macrob. Saturn. lib.* 1.

Nothing can be more uncertain, than what the end of things will be, when once a change is begun, this onely we are ſure of, that in ſuch a caſe we ſhould be very miſerable; it being impoſſible to *Force* a Kingdom into a *New Model*, but by *Forcing* it into *pieces*

first; which cannot be done, but by bringing upon it such *Throws*, *Pangs*, and intolerable *Convulsions*, as will indanger the very *Being* of the Body Politick. Of this we saw enough in the late Bloudy and Unnatural War; and to speak freely unto you, *My dear Country-Men*, perhaps no Men in the Kingdom have greater reason to remember the Calamities of those times, than *we*; *we* whose *Pleasant* and *Fruitful* Countrey was so long exposed to Harassings and Outrage; *we* whose Loyal Parents suffered to that degree, that many of them had little to leave us at the last, but the *Sense* and the *Smart* of *their* Sufferings; *we*, who at the very minutes of our *Birth* were in danger of being hurried *out* of the world, as *naked* as we came *into* it; *we*, whose *Infancy* was spent in the midst of *Arms*, and were trained up, as it were, at the point of the *Spear*, and at the mouth of the *Gun*; *we*, whose Friends feared not to roll in Bloud for the King and the Church sake, that had the Honour to be *Martyrs* for Loyalty, and made *us* happy in *this* respect, that even *we* were *Confessors* from the Cradle.

And shall *we* now, who ought to Inherit the

the *Zeal* and Fidelity of thoſe brave Spirits, entail *miſery* upon a *Third* Generation, by being led away our *ſelves* out of the old paths of Righteouſneſs and Peace, by the Popular wiles of ſome, who would quit ſcores with Majeſty for *one* Act of *Oblivion*, by ſtanding in need of *another*? For Gods Love let us beware, that we be not *trick't* out of our Duty and Allegiance, but ſeriouſly conſider, whither thoſe Acts which ſome Beautifeus would have us think to be expreſſions of *Zeal* for *Religion*, be not rather the Methods of thoſe in *Solomons* time, who were given to change meerly out of *Ambition*, or *Diſcontent*, or *Malice* and *Revenge*, and the like.

In the Reign of King *Henry* the 8th, the Papiſts in the North raiſed a moſt Formidable Rebellion, which the Rebels (who were fourty thouſand ſtrong) had the Impudence to call *A Pilgrimage of Grace*. 'And (ſaith 'my Author) all that joined to them took 'an *Oath*, that they entred into this *Pilgri-* 'mage of Grace for the Love of God, for the 'Preſervation of the Kings Perſon and Iſſue, 'for the Purifying of the Nobility, and for

Dr. Burnets *Hiſt. of Ref.* part 1. *pag.* 229.

'the driving away all base born and ill Coun-'sellors. Here was High *Treason* under a spe-cious *Title*; and an Insurrection, which of all others then did *most* threaten the *King*, the Government, and the ruin of Religion, was stiled, forsooth, *A Pilgrimage of Grace*,

It is not long ago (not so long ago that we should forget it) that *another* Rebellion was raised by pretending Protestants; and *that* had a *specious* character also; for it was the *Old Pilgrimage of Grace* in a *New Edition*; onely the *Title* was changed, and 'twas under the pretense of an *Holy League*, a *Blessed Covenant*, which some then had the confidence to compare to *The Covenant of Grace.*

And how do we know, but an *Association of Grace* may come next? But, if after all those palpable cheats which have been put upon the world, we suffer our selves to be abused *again*, especially *we* who have had the happiness to be born in *the Loyal County of Wilts*; if *we* too be *Sheepishly* led away, truly the world may well say, that we were born and bred *vervecum in patria*, among *silly* Creatures that are *apt* to go *astray*; and we shall make our Country famous for *another* Wonder,

Wonder I mean, an *innumerable* company of *Blocks*.

To maintain the Honour of your *Country*, and to prevent the ruin of a whole *Kingdom*, let me beseech you to carry my Text in your *Hearts*, and *meddle not with them that are given to change*. And in order hereunto give me leave to recommend these three things unto your Practice.

1. First, that direction which you find in the Front of this Verse, the *Fear of the Lord*. Without the true fear of God on the Subjects part, the Kings Throne must needs stand in a slippery place, and an *Unstable* Condition, and all Respects and Duty to him must be *Precarious* and *Arbitrary*. He cannot be *Secure* of any but *Their* Loyalty, who dread and Reverence him for *Conscience* sake, and for the *Lords* sake: nor is any *Confidence* to be placed, but in Men who act upon the Right Principles of Religion and Honesty. Some may regard Majesty for the *Loaves* at his Table, who yet when they have eaten to the Full, may be ready to strike him on the *Face*. And some may *Complement* him onely for *want* of *Power* and *Ability* to hurt him. 'Tis

Religion

Religion and the *Fear of God* onelv, that can *enſure* our Affections and Fidelitv to him, that can keep Men *Right* and *Steddy*, eſpecially in tickliſh and diſtracted times: That's a *ſure* Band, that will *hold*, when all other tyes will prove as weak as *Sampſons* Withs were, when the Philiſtines were upon him. For true Religion teacheth us, *that we ſhall be damned if we reſiſt*; *that we muſt obey Magiſtrates, and be ſubject not onely for wrath, but for Conſcience ſake*; *that we muſt ſtudy to be quiet, and to do our own buſineſs*; *that we muſt give Honour to whom Honour is due*, and that *we muſt not do evil that good may come, but commit our ſelves to God in well-doing*. Theſe are the ſtanding commands of God, and the ſincere keeping of them is a neceſſary *Branch* of that *Fear* which is due unto him, and there could not be ſuch a thing as Treaſon in the world, were theſe commands obſerved; becauſe they carry ſuch an *Awe* over the Spirits of all *governable* Men, as will keep them from being *Receptive* of thoſe *Dangerous* and *Licentious* Principles, which we find in the *Jeſuites*, and *Leviathans*, and *Republicans* Goſpel.

2. Next to the *Fear of God*, the *Fear of the King*

King is Coercive of Obedience: *my Son, fear thou the Lord, and the King.* By which is meant, not a *Servile* fear, such a *Base* and *Low-spirited* Passion, as is in a Slothful and Unfaithful *Slave*, who stands in fear of his Lord not for *Conscience*, but for *Punishment* Sake, and is not so much afraid to *do* Evil, as he is to *Suffer* and *Smart* for it. But such a Fear is meant here, as a Tender and Dutiful *Childe* hath of his *Father*, whose *Displeasure* he values more than his *Blowe*; such a Fear as is mingled with *Affection* and *Love* and *Hearty good Will*; which the Father of our Country hath a *greater* right unto, then our *Natural* Parents. Now, did this *Fear* reign, as it ought to do, in mens *Hearts*, State-*Protenses* would be as *Rare*, as they are now *Mischievous*. For *Here* those Monsters *begin*, to *Lower* Majesty, to render the King *Vile*, *Contemptible* and *Mean*, and to spoil him of his *Prerogative*, to get at his *Head* by *degrees* and *inches*; *That* being the onely *Popular* way of destroying the *Man*, to Strip and divest the *King* first.

3. *Meddle* not with men that are given to change; that is, Avoid their *Company*, have no *Fellowship* with them, come not neer their

their *Cabals*, enter not into their *secrets*. The reason why some shrink from their *Leialty* is, (as one hath rightly observed) *cum defectoribus consortium*, because they *Herd* and *Mingle* themselves with those who are *Disaffected* to their Prince. And he instanceth in those who joyned in *Absaloms* Conspiracy: they had no *original* design against *David*, no black intentions at the *first*, but were *wheadled* and *wiredrawn* into a down-right *Rebellion* by *Associating* with designing Men. For the *Conversation* of a Rebel is like the *Plague*, it carries *Infection* along with it, and exposeth a Man to open danger of being Poisoned with the same *Principles*, and of being brought into the same Condemnation. For by this means the Devil draws him into *Engagements*, and gets the *Hank* over him, so that he, who at first was *Unwary* onely, at last becomes wretchedly *Wicked*: upon which account *Solomon* gives every *Well-meaning* Man this *safe* advice, not to *Gaddle*, not to *Combine*, not to *Converse* over-familiarly with them that are given to Change.

I have no more to add but my earnest Prayers unto the God of *Order* and *Peace*, that he would endue all our hearts with that true Wisdom from above which is Pure and Peaceable; that he would bless us with the long continuance of the *best* of *Governments*, and the *best of things*; that he would open our eyes to see the things which belong unto our peace, before they be hid from us: that the *Government of this world may be so ordered by his governance, that we may all lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*, through Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Redeemer, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be all Honour, Glory and Praise for ever.

FINIS.